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be entertained, if the alteration be not for the worse. Self strengthens itself—its limited self—by absorption in the interests that draw it most powerfully; but if it would grow from less to more the means lie in devotion to objective ends, and in surrender to worthy influences balanced by self-respect.

Self-development and self-surrender are not rival principles of the good life requiring the mediation of a shadowy third to keep them balanced and to make them one. But self-surrender is the chief means by which development is accomplished in a well-maintained self.

SOPHIE BRYANT.

LONDON.

THE PRINCIPLES AND CHIEF DANGERS OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF CHARITY.*

No one will suppose that I intend to pass an opinion on institutions or methods of administration in the United States. I hope, before I leave this country, to see something of what is being done in Boston and New York, at least. But to-day I propose to illustrate the principles of charity organization purely by London experience. It is for my hearers to judge how far anything that I say has an application that can interest them.

The principle of our work, as I understand it, is the faith in character,—the faith, if we like, in the ideal. Only it must be faith in that ideal which is the essence and controlling force of the real; not in fancies and sentiments which are simply a failure to cope with reality.

Let us plunge into our subject by asking what our title means. "Charity," it will be said, is alms-giving; "organization of charity," then, must mean "arrangements for the distribution of alms."

This is just what we do *not* mean. "Charity" for us means

* A lecture given before the School of Applied Ethics at Plymouth, Massachusetts, in the summer of 1892, by Bernard Bosanquet, M.A., LL.D., of London.

"neighborly service;" "organization of charity," therefore, means "concerted action in neighborly service."

The organization of charity, thus understood, involves two essential factors :

First, there must be a high and definite conception of human welfare, in so far as it can be affected by men's attempts to help their less fortunate fellows.

Secondly, there must be concerted action or division of labor in the light of this idea, and with a view to realizing it, between all persons and agencies that are attempting to do neighborly service.

In other words, it is the general principle of "organization" always to work on a plan, and that a plan based upon respect for character. The great danger is in not having any plan, and therefore interfering with other people's lives,—a most grave responsibility,—without a distinct conception of any good to be done them on the whole. Nothing undermines character so much as these chance interferences. I may illustrate this principle by the external phenomenon, observed more than twenty years ago when the London Charity Organization Society was founded, that enough and probably far too much money was being spent in relief, apparently with the result of increasing degradation to the poor. The idea of the founders was, so far as money was concerned at all, to avoid raising more, but to try if the existing expenditure could not be made to do good instead of harm.

Now, I will try to give a picture of what we mean by "organization;" and I will begin with the work of a "District Committee." There are thirty-nine District Committees in London, one or more for each Poor Law Union; the Society consists of the federation of these committees, with a central office at 15 Buckingham Street, of which I will speak later.

Organization presupposes elements to be organized. What are the elements which we find in an average London district, with a fair mixture of rich and poor?

In the district which I have in my eye there is a population of 90,000. Judging by Mr. Charles Booth's figures, there would be in this population some 3000 "very" poor (say 700

families) and some 18,000 "poor" (4000 families). Within these (4 to 5000 families, but not including a very large proportion of them at a time) is the field of operations of charity. The comfortable working-class, numbering some 50,000, would only come in its way very occasionally and with respect to its doubtful members, or by unusual misfortune. Operating upon this "poor" population, in all sorts of ways, there are such agencies as these: Four old-established benevolent societies, enjoying the confidence of the resident tradesmen, whose charity is largely done through these societies; six parishes of the Established Church, all of which do relief work by different methods and to different amounts, and some of which have small charitable endowments; three or four Nonconformist organizations, attending in some degree at least to their own poor; and two powerful Roman Catholic churches with the charities belonging to them, and with a branch of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. There are three hospitals in the district, and three more very large ones within easy reach of it. There is a free dispensary (charitable), a newly-established provident dispensary, and a settlement of the district nurses who go out to nurse the poor gratuitously in their own homes. Of course, there are immense numbers of charitable ladies and others who give alms privately, and, in addition to all the rest, there is the tremendous machinery of the Poor Law, with its workhouse and well-equipped hospital ("infirmary") in the centre of the district, and its schools in the country to which destitute children can be sent, and with its out-door relief, medical relief, and dispensary—all under the authority of a Board of Guardians, elected by the inhabitants for this purpose. Then there is the system of publicly-inspected primary schools (whether "board schools" or "church schools") through which much charitable work is done, both bad and good; and there are also the very numerous charities of all sorts and kinds, which, without being especially local, are accessible to the poor of this district as to all the poor of the metropolis.

If such are the elements to be organized, what is the danger in the absence of organization? How does mischief arise

from these all going their own way, regardless of each other?

We may describe the mischief done in three ways,—as doles, as overlapping, and as the down-grade to pauperism.

Doles.—Though the total expenditure on relief in such a district must be quite enormous, yet each person or agency, looking at the mass of poverty, and ignoring all other workers, feels hopelessly poor,—too poor to act on a plan. An old woman, getting past work, who is, in Charity Organization Society slang, “a pension case or nothing,” has been receiving an occasional food ticket or a shilling from some agency, perhaps a church. “What good did you think you were doing by that?” you ask them. “Ah, well, we should have liked to do more; but we are so poor, and there are so many!” So no attempt is made to take hold of, and set on its feet, say, a single family. Want of faith and want of knowledge make a purpose impossible, and the aimless scattering of tickets and shillings continues. Truly, as an old woman who had thus been “helped” remarked to a friend of mine, “You know, sir, that doesn’t go into deep things!” No, indeed! All that this practice effects is to create a gambling spirit that watches for windfalls, to encourage the desire to look poor,—for planless charity is not attracted where help is most effective, but where sentiment is most immediately touched,—and to undercut wages. The dole which enables the recipient to underbid a competitor for work makes up the difference to the recipient, but not to the competitor. The tendency in this respect is to sink wages below starvation-point by the average amount of the charitable dole.

This is bad enough; but when you get several agencies bidding for the same poor person, the result becomes positively horrible,—it forces the poor into fraud. This is *overlapping*,—when the same person is helped, ignorantly, by several different agencies; sometimes, alas! by several different religious denominations. It is all very well not to let your right hand know what your left hand does; but if your right is Presbyterian and your left Roman Catholic, and both are

helping the same person, it becomes advisable that they should interchange information.

Doles and overlapping, together with the careless administration of public or semi-public relief, form the *down-grade to pauperism*. Money is to be had by luck, medical relief is to be had from charity or the Poor Law, out-door relief from the public funds may be got if you are fortunate in your application, and so people become accustomed to "chance it;" not to manage well what they have, not to make provision for so certain a case as ordinary illness, let alone a time of slack work or old age. They form the habit of going to public or semi-public offices to get benefits which they might have provided for themselves. They are not to blame. We confuse them; nothing is so pathetic as the way in which they accept what is as a guide to what should be. But it is they who have to suffer. When thrift has not been practised, and independence of character has been impaired, the end is the workhouse. We can tempt them not to provide for themselves, but we cannot and do not adequately provide for them, except in the "Union."* The great provident institutions which are the creation of the British working-class, and are quite unmatched in the world as proofs of character and administrative ability among the wage-earners, have no chance where unorganized charity prevails.

In such a chaos, what is the duty of a Charity Organization Committee? It is commonly spoken of as twofold, but the first branch of it really includes the second. "Organization" includes all that a District Committee should do in the way of "Relief."

The first and fundamental duty of the committee, then, is to "organize the district." What does this mean? Simply to bring all these people, all these agencies and institutions, into a scheme of concerted action, or division of labor, in order to work upon a plan with a view to raising the whole life of the poor. To act on a plan in every individual case,

* A current term for the workhouse, owing to the fact that several parishes are generally united for Poor-Law purposes.

and to inform one's self what other agencies are doing and co-operate with them, are really two sides of the same procedure. For each of the institutions is fit for something; there is some want that it more especially can supply, although, in the absence of organization, it is probably (like the hospital out-departments to-day) straining to do something else, and doing it ill or harmfully. By knowing what others can do, the despair which prevented efficient work is dispelled. We try not to scatter our help over the widest possible surface, but to play our part thoroughly, and if we can only help one family to see it through and make it self-supporting. Then something at least is done; but otherwise far worse than nothing is done. Thus, while persuading all whom it can reach of the ethical necessity for thorough work, the committee has to forward the problem in its other aspect, by charting the district, so to speak, and ascertaining *how* all might and should co-operate, and bringing them all together to determine upon co-operation. Endowed charities may be used for pensions, the benevolent societies may divide the district and make the relief more adequate, and exchange information with other charities. "Poor-Law cases" ("unhelpable") that apply for charity may be sent to the Poor Law; "helpable" cases that apply to the Poor Law may be referred to charity. The leaders of the working class in the district should be made friends with; good provident societies made known, their juvenile branches favored, the school-teachers consulted and interested in the thrift propaganda and in all work affecting children; the clergy should be begged—entreated—to co-operate, to give information, to let their district visitors be trained, to avoid wholesale and injurious methods of relief. The careless use of the hospitals should be checked; provident medical institutions established; sanitary law insisted on, and intelligent Poor-Law administration in every way forwarded.

That is what "organizing a district" means. The long and short of it is the transformation of a charitable chaos into an orderly and friendly neighborhood, in which rich and poor consult together and unite their resources with a clear con-

certed idea, not only for the relief of individual cases, but more especially for the control of general influences. When this is done, if there still are gaps in the array of institutions, they may be filled up. But, usually, there are plenty of workers and plenty of institutions, only, because the workers are untrained, and both workers and institutions are unorganized, little has been done that is beneficial, and everything that is injurious.

The task of administering relief is a secondary part of the duty of a committee, but, as things are, has to be largely undertaken. "Administering" relief must be distinguished from "providing" it, of which I will speak below. It is plain that as the committee becomes fused with the neighborhood, the relief work of the committee passes, as it ought, into the relief work of *the neighborhood in consultation*.

However this may be, all who work for or with the committee, or who advise their neighbors in relief work, should follow certain plain principles. Help should be given exactly as we give it to a friend or relation in a scrape or in misfortune. I do not think that unction and ostentatious "sympathy" are of much use, though in some trying cases the loving care of a good man or woman may make all the difference. As a rule, I should aim at a friendly business-like tone, the tone of a sympathetic lawyer or doctor. I should give no moral intention to the inquiries, but presuppose the duty of helping, if effectively possible, and simply urge that we must have the case all clear before us, if we are to find out what can be done. I do not believe that inquiries thus conducted are painful to respectable people, beyond the pain which is necessarily involved in applying for help to strangers. If the matter is put sensibly before them, they soon understand, I believe, why it is necessary to know all the family circumstances, and they appreciate the possibility that further knowledge may disclose means of help which at first did not suggest themselves. I give an instance which illustrates the nature of thorough help based on thorough knowledge.

A boy, who appeared ill-nourished, was being given half-penny dinners at school. This was the broadcast help that

we condemn—too much, because too little. Inquiry showed that the family were most respectable people, but the father, a copper-worker, was unable to work through chest-disease. The wife and one boy were earning something. More than twenty pounds was raised by the Charity Organization Society for this case, with the final result of setting up the family in a different line of work and saving it from pauperism.

It cost money, thought, and trouble, but a family was saved from pauperism. Dinners to the boy would have been useless while the family was sinking lower and lower.*

In case, however, of very persistent ill-luck there is almost always a screw loose in character, and for this reason again it is absolutely necessary to know the history of a case before trying to help. One great chance is to catch people suffering from their first folly, and then they can sometimes be set straight. Want of work through illness breaks down many a family. Illness, which would be transient, is aggravated by want of food, and seeds of delicacy are sown in wife and children at the same time. Now, every English workman, earning decent wages, can secure himself a good allowance for a long period in case of being out of work through illness, by joining one of the great Friendly Societies. The highest payment is about two pounds a year (Hearts of Oak), and secures eighteen shillings a week for six months, and a smaller allowance beyond that time. As a rule, one would not help a man in mere illness who had not done this much for himself, unless, of course, he had saved in some equivalent way. But catch him before the mischief is done, get him to join a good club *and stay in*, and you may have done well to save him from the last results of his improvidence. Refusal, with explanation, is no less important than help. People soon learn why you do and do not help. And it educates them. A charitable agency may be very fairly judged by the character of the cases that come to it. They learn that dirt and slovenliness are no claim to help; that energy and resource are qualities

* Charity Organization Society's Report of Special Committee on feeding School-children, 1891.

which the helper or helpers will gladly meet half-way; that no agency can supply the needs that spring from lack of forethought, industry, and management.

Relief, I said, is a form of organization. To insure this, we prefer to raise money on the case, and we are condemned, by those who know, if we employ our general funds for relief purposes.* Raising the money required specially on each case, though very troublesome, has immense advantages. *It enforces family ties, and neighborly or other duties*, instead of relaxing them. "Who is bound to help in this case?" is the first question, and members of the family, who may be living at a distance, are often glad to be asked, and to know that by combination of their resources—one giving money, another taking a child, and so on—their relatives are being effectively helped, with no contribution from strangers except advice and arrangement. Again, it *tests work*; on every case, instead of a secretary saying, "we will do this," and drawing money out of the bank to do it, you have to propound a plan of treatment which will secure the approval and adhesion of those who are to help, whether rich or poor. A large general fund at the bank is very dangerous. It makes you independent, and disinclined to press for money and personal help from existing agencies and persons bound to assist. Though we must, for the present, *administer* relief, we certainly ought not to *provide* it.

The question of visiting is not an easy one. Visitors to the same family should not be multiplied, and I think there should be, as a rule, some natural and definite reason for calling,—*e.g.*, "provident" visiting to collect sums for provident purposes. The existing visitors—clergy or district visitors—should always be utilized, if possible, when work is to be done in their districts. On the other hand, in order that this should be done, they must submit to training. The reports of an

* To Americans, familiar with the Boston Associated Charities, and the New York Charity Organization Society, this doctrine will seem too elementary to need explaining. But I let the passage stand; the INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ETHICS is read in England.

untrained lady-visitor and her advice are often abjectly useless, and to act on them would encourage fraud and all the mischiefs of charity.

As a transition from the work of District Committees to that of the central office, I may mention how convalescent aid is facilitated by the society,—a simple but efficient piece of organization. Great numbers of Convalescent Homes exist for poor people recovering from illness. They differ in climate, in management, in the kind of cases that they will receive. If a clergyman, or other charitable individual, wants to send a poor person to a Convalescent Home, he has first to find out what home will suit the case; then, probably, to go about asking for a subscriber's letter, and then he may find that the home he has chosen has no vacancy for weeks, while another, equally suitable, could have admitted the patient at once. Through a Charity Organization Committee things are differently managed. At the central office in Buckingham Street there is a special secretary with a sub-committee containing medical men, and this secretary, among other duties, has to be in communication with all reliable Convalescent Homes accessible from London, and to secure beforehand in each of them the number of beds which experience teaches him will be needed by the society. When a convalescent case is approved by a committee, the medical certificate, and an explanatory letter, go up to the "central;" the secretary looks down his book for a suitable home at which he has a vacancy, and the admission order is sent back in a day or two at most. When, as often happens, a church pays the weekly charge at the home, or the applicant and other persons together defray it, this is a perfect piece of "organization." An immense benefit has been provided for the applicant in the promptest way, and the society has not contributed a penny except in office rents and secretaries' salaries.

The central office does no relief work. It partly supervises and supplements, as in the above instance, the work of the District Committees, and partly acts as a bureau of statistical and other information, and as a centre of propaganda and inquiry for the general public. Technically, it is the

"Council" office, the Council being composed of representatives from all the committees; and various standing committees appointed directly or indirectly by Council meet there week by week to control the policy and consider the work of the society. The District Committees in poorer parts of London are subsidized by the Council, and in some cases have the use of a high-class paid secretary, who is an officer of the Council, paid by it, and transferable from place to place at its pleasure. All this, of course, involves much central supervision.

The more public work of the Council office is at times condemned as *doctrinaire*. I often wonder whether its critics know by what a mass of experience it is supported. Eight hundred or nine hundred volunteer workers, besides a dozen or more highly skilled and devoted official secretaries on District Committees, with the forty or fifty "agents,"—men more of the type of clerks than of secretaries, but able and experienced in the life of their localities,—all of them are week by week in the districts gathering the material which pours into the central office in the shape of reports, appeals for advice, notifications of new difficulties or new institutions, answers to circular questions on matters of the day, and notes on prevalent helps or hindrances in raising the life of the poor. No investigation, I should fancy, has ever been initiated, and no policy ever adopted, at the Council office, which has not been pressed upon it again and again by the experience of the district workers. Elaborate reports, with evidence, by eight or nine special committees, appointed by the society, have in each case carried some important social topic into a clearer and more practical stage, from the Report of 1875 on the Housing of the Poor, which had much to do with the passing of Sir R. Cross's Artisans' Dwellings Act, to the Reports on Homeless Cases, School Feeding, Insurance and Saving, the Treatment of the Feeble-Minded, and the Organization of Medical Charities, directed to burning questions of the most urgent importance in 1890-92.

Another branch of work, which by itself might occupy a less energetic organization, is the "Inquiry Work," with the

resulting "cautionary card." Week by week at the Administrative Committee, on the standing agendum "Inquiry work," the reports of the special secretary and officers—submitted in every case to a volunteer referee—upon institutions and individuals about which and whom information has been asked by intending subscribers, are carefully scanned in respect of their thoroughness and impartiality. Not only are rogues and frauds detected, their public support cut off, and libel actions against that "public defendant" our secretary successfully encountered, but the friendly criticism which subscribers to *bonâ fide* Societies elicit is often of service in bringing about changes for the better in financial and other administration. The "cautionary card" is a list issued yearly to our subscribers of persons and institutions before assisting which it is well to communicate with the Charity Organization Society. Its utility is universally recognized.

As always, the closest grasp of facts gives the highest faith. The workers all know the power of character, and that no conditions will raise the poor, if character is sacrificed, while hard conditions can be transformed with extraordinary rapidity by ceasing to demoralize the wage-earners. In well-known examples this has been done. By abolishing out-relief in one country district of fifteen thousand souls, pauperism was reduced from about one-twelfth to about one-hundredth of the population. This is what all workers know to be natural; it is not necessity, but our folly that degrades the poor. But so low is the faith in character of those who merely write and talk and count, that no evasion is too strange for them rather than the belief of the simplest and most natural facts. "The poor," they first said, "are driven into the workhouse by the refusal of out-relief." The figures were produced, and it was plain they were not there, for the numbers had fallen. "They were driven out into neighboring Unions." Figures were obtained, and the neighboring Unions appeared to have benefited rather than suffered. "They were living on in great poverty and misery." Clergy and residents were consulted, and it was seen that they were doing nothing of

the kind. They had turned from paupers into self-supporting citizens, as any one would expect.*

All these evasions of fact, and the half-hearted ideals of those who look away from reality, demand heroic measures. Proposals for these latter—such as weekly pensions for all old people over sixty-five, to be paid by the State—all rest on the persuasion that the life of the wage-earning classes cannot be organized on a business footing (taking the whole life from infancy to death as the unit to be provided for), but must in some way be supplemented from without. I do not myself believe such supplementation to be possible, in the sense of causing each man at his death to have had a larger share of wealth than a wage-system pure and simple, with proper unions and thrift-organizations, would have given him. This is for economists to decide. To me it seems to be simply cutting out some elements from the standard of life, by which, more than by anything else, we now, I suppose, consider the wage-level to be determined.

But at any rate the experiment is horribly hazardous, and wholly unnecessary. One can see the barometer of pauperism and demoralization fluctuating week by week in different divisions of the same district according to the administration. Nothing is plainer than that to an extent at present quite indefinite you can make or unmake paupers—not merely technical paupers, but poor and suffering people—at pleasure. The success of labor organization is dependent on a wise policy in this respect. When this shall have been tried to the full and shall have failed, it will be time to adopt a policy of State-supplementation, which will in all probability stereotype such evils of the wage-system as it may find existing.

I do not say that all drastic legislative reforms are bad. The present more advanced state of the dwellings question is due, as I have said, in a large measure to the initiative of the

* The whole story may be seen in Mr. Loch's pamphlet, "Old Age Pensions and Pauperism," in reply to Mr. Chamberlain, and subsequent letters. See, also, Mr. Loch's paper in "Proceedings of Poor-Law Conference for South Wales, May, 1892." All these publications can be obtained from the London Charity Organization Society, 15 Buckingham Street, Adelphi.

Charity Organization Society; and while futile schemes are being advocated, there are many—too many—needful reforms, well known by all experts to be desirable, which get left. I do say that legislation is all bad if and so far as it makes us forget that society is a structure of wills, and that if we do not look to the soundness of individual character—if we allow it to be perplexed and demoralized by a system of half-earnings, half-pauperism—the whole fabric must fall to pieces.

BERNARD BOSANQUET.

LONDON.

THE ETHICS OF AN ETERNAL BEING.

All human laws are fed by the one divine law: for it prevaileth as far as it listeth, and sufficeth for all, and surviveth all.—HERACLITUS.

If the dead are not raised, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.—PAUL OF TARSUS.

THOSE thinkers who believe in the possibility of ethics, that is, in freedom of choice, and consequent responsibility, hold these two propositions:

1. Human actions, in so far as they are human, that is, rational and deliberate, are actions performed for the sake of certain chosen ends.

2. The ethical character of actions is determined, primarily by these ends, and secondarily by the means chosen to reach them.

Now, all human ends may be included in one or the other of two classes: (1) ends which consist in *having*, and (2) ends which consist in *being*. No man ever acts rationally unless with a view either to having something, or to being something.

The things which a man may *have* are very various,—wealth, honor, pleasure, friends, etc.; but they all agree in this, that they may be taken away from him, without in any way essentially altering his character. What a man may *be* is summed up in the attributes of his three spiritual faculties, (1) intelligence, (2) affection, (3) will, none of which can be altered without altering his character, that is, without making